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**LOFTUS  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.**

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**NORTH RIDING (GUISBOROUGH)  
COMBINED DISTRICTS.**

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**REPORT  
for the Year 1924**

of the Medical Officer of Health,  
**C. R. GIBSON, M.A., M.B., Ch.B.  
D.P.H.**

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*Guisborough :  
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1925.*







## To the Chairman and Members of the Loftus Urban District Council.

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GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my report for the year ended 31st December, 1924.

In general social and climatic conditions the year has not differed a great deal from the two preceding ones: the rainfall has not been much above the average but the amount of sunshine, particularly in the 'summer' months has been much below, so that the weather conditions generally can be described as cool and dull. Unemployment has remained at the same level and trade stagnant.

The vital statistics continue the satisfactory record of the previous two years. The death-rate has been somewhat larger than in 1923—at 9.2 deaths per thousand of the population, compared with 8.1—but is still so low as to be remarkable. The infant mortality rate has even improved on the record rate of 1923, and attained the low level of 43 infant deaths per thousand births, there being the same number of infant deaths as in the previous year, but slightly more births on which to base the proportion. The birth-rate was 19.9, which was the average rate of the two preceding years.

When the highest death-rate of three consecutive years is the low one of 9.2 it would seem as if a more detailed examination of it is called for. In the first place it is just as well to inquire as to the possible accuracy of the figures. Annual death-rates are arrived at by comparing the total deaths registered in the year with the population of the district. There can be little question as to the correctness of the total of deaths. In census years, such as 1921, the census furnishes a precise figure for the population, but in other years, such as these three last, one is dependent on an estimation of the population which cannot be expected to attain the accuracy of an enumeration. But the Registrar-General's estimates are very carefully made, and checked from various directions, and, so soon after a census, are very unlikely to err to the extent of 10%, an error the correction of which would still leave the death-rate abnormally low. The substantial accuracy of the figures as they are, is, however, supported by the correspondence of the birth-rate, calculated on the same estimate of population, with the birth-rate in neighbouring and similar districts, and also by the fact that the infant mortality rate, which is independent of any estimate of populations, has shown the same spectacular decrease.

A district containing an unusually small proportion of elderly people or of young children should show a much smaller death-rate than another district of similar healthiness but with a larger proportionate number of old folk and infants. This effect can be corrected when the proportion of people at all different ages is revealed in the census by calculating what the death-rate for the whole population would have been if the sexes and different

ages had been in the same ratio as in a "standard" or average population. This ratio is called the "standardized" death-rate. The figures of the 1921 census have enabled me to make this correction, but in this instance it is so small as to be negligible, being less than one per cent., owing to the fact that the distribution of the inhabitants in the district over the two sexes and the different ages is very similar to what it is in the standard population.

The death-rates recorded for 1924 and the two previous years reflect therefore with accuracy the health of the district. The average yearly rate over these years has been 8.6, which corresponds to an average expectation of life at birth of 65 years: this death-rate is only two-thirds of the average rate in urban districts in the North Riding in the years 1922 and 1923 or of the average rate in your district in the period 1914-1918, itself more favourable than any previous five-year period.

The death-rate of the two sexes in these three years in your district has been nearly equal, but the female death-rate slightly the larger, 8.7, against a male death-rate of 8.4. This is quite a different state of affairs to what obtained ten years ago, the female death-rate in 1912-14 being 10.18 and the male death rate 13.8. I drew attention last year to the great improvement in the health of adult males and discussed its causes: the onset of the improvement coincided with that of unemployment and lowered incomes.

The different ages of life have shared more equally in the improvement than have the two sexes. The death-rate in the neighbouring urban district of Guisborough has been in these years approximately the same as that for the whole of the urban districts in the North Riding, and by comparing the death-rate at different ages in the two districts an indication is afforded of the period of life which has benefitted most. Under 4 years of age the death-rate in this district in 1922-24 was 85% of that at the same age in the Guisborough Urban District: from 5-14 years of age, 74%; from 15-24 years of age, 136%: from 25-44 years of age, 71%: from 45-64 years of age 82%; and over 64 years, 67%. The improvement is most marked at adult ages, but only slightly less in childhood: in adolescence, the experience in Loftus has been worse than in Guisborough.

The following table, giving the annual death-rate over these three last years from various causes of death in the Loftus and in the Guisborough Urban Districts enables comparison to be made as to the relative toll of different diseases in the two districts:—

Annual Death-rate, 1922-24, from various causes.

	Loftus Urban District.	Guisborough Urban District.
<i>Acute Respiratory Diseases:</i>		
Influenza ... ..	0.29	0.61
Bronchitis ... ..	0.54	0.80
Pneumonia ... ..	0.40	0.80
Other Respiratory Diseases	0.11	0.09
Total	1.34	2.30

	Loftus Urban.	Guisborough Urban.
<i>Tuberculosis.</i>		
Respiratory	0.65	0.52
Other	0.22	0.11
Total	0.87	0.66
<i>Cancer</i>	0.50	1.17
<i>Heart Disease, Arterio-Sclerosis,</i>		
<i>Cerebral Haemorrhage, etc.</i>	2.55	2.61
<i>Nephritis</i>	0.32	0.66
<i>Infectious Diseases of Children</i>	0.22	0.14
<i>Congenital Debility, Malform-</i>		
<i>ations, and Premature Birth</i>	0.50	0.66
<i>Puerperal Sepsis, Accidents of</i>		
<i>Pregnancy, etc.</i>	0.11	0.14
<i>Violence</i>	0.47	0.56
<i>All other diseases</i>	1.69	4.12
Total	8.55	13.03

Notwithstanding the low total death-rate, the mortality rate from tuberculosis and from the infectious diseases of children (i. e. measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, and scarlet fever) has been higher in this district than in Guisborough. The death-rates from other causes fall below the rates in the neighbouring district to a more or less marked extent. It may be particularly noticed that the death-rate from cancer has not, as yet, shown the increase which is almost general elsewhere.

*Maternity and Child Welfare.*—For the third year in succession the infant mortality rate in the district has been under 60; on corresponding births the rate has actually been, in 1922, 52 infant deaths per 1000; in 1923, 45; and in 1924, 44; the average over the three years being  $48\frac{1}{2}$ . These figures are within measureable distance of what may be regarded as the inevitable, or accidental, mortality of the first year of life, and may be compared with the average infant mortality rate in 1914–18 of 120. The number of deaths is, of course, an indication also of the amount of sickness, the great reduction in which in the first year of life will lead in the course of time to a healthier adult race.

The Welfare Centre which meets fortnightly in the Loftus Town Hall has continued its useful work; the attendance has been rather less than in previous years. No free or half-price milk has been distributed during 1924.

*Infectious Diseases.* There has been no epidemic of any size, beyond mumps, during the year. A few cases of whooping cough occurred in the autumn, with one death. The first case of encephalitis lethargica, or sleepy sickness, was notified during the year, in an adult male, and recovered, but with some psychical impairment.

Steps were initiated to improve the Isolation Hospital by the installation of water-closets, bath-rooms, a hot water supply and the electric light, the work being completed early in 1925. The Council has decided that any cases of smallpox that may occur in the district shall be treated in one of the blocks at the Isolation Hospital. So far as my information goes the inhabitants of the district are no better protected by vaccination than neighbouring districts, that is, somewhere about one-half of the children will be unvaccinated. The Isolation Hospital is on an unfenced site, at the side of a frequented thoroughfare, and within a couple of hundred yards of streets of houses: the isolation therefore can only be regarded as imperfect. In the case of smallpox imperfect isolation from a largely unvaccinated population is likely to lead to an epidemic of some size. It is twenty-two years since the last case of smallpox occurred in your district, and to make annual provision for so rare a visitor may seem an unnecessary expense. There is, however, the risk that the extra cost, if and when smallpox does appear in the district, may then exceed the total of annual savings made by omitting special provision, and the continued prevalence of the disease in a neighbouring city lends importance to the question.

*Port Sanitary Administration.*—The jetty at Skinningrove has been used by the Skinningrove Iron Co. throughout the year for four small vessels engaged in coastwise traffic or conveying goods to ports on the opposite side of the North Sea. A weekly record is received by me, from the Ministry of Health, of infectious diseases at ports, and I have arranged to let the Customs' Officer at Whitby know when, from the occurrence of infectious disease at any of the ports used by the boats from Skinningrove, it would be advisable to warn me of the arrival in Skinningrove of boats from these ports. This event has not arisen. I have received no intimation of any illness on board a boat arriving at the jetty. As boats can only lie at the jetty at certain states of the tide and there is no mooring ground, the sanitary inspection of boats there is seldom performed. I have inspected one boat during the year and found it satisfactory.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

C. R. GIBSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

Guisborough,

29th April, 1925.

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## APPENDIX.

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### 1. General Statistics.

Area (acres) 6,400.

Population (Reg. Gen's. Estimate 1924), 9,358. Census, 1921, 9,012.

Rateable Value, £37,188.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate, £155.

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### 2. Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

			Male.	Female.	Total.		Rate.
Births, legitimate	...	...	87	86	173	}	19.9
Births, illegitimate	...	...	6	7	13	}	
Deaths	...	...	44	42	86		9.2
Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth :							
				from sepsis	0		
				from other causes	0		
Deaths of infants under one year per 1000 births : —					Legitimate	...	46
					Illegitimate	...	0
Deaths from Measles	...	...	...	...	0		
Deaths from Whooping-cough	...	...	...	...	1		
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	...	0		

## 3. Notifiable Diseases during the Year 1924.

Disease.		Total Cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox	...	—	—	—
Diphtheria	...	1	—	—
Scarlet Fever	...	12	6	—
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	...	—	—	—
Puerperal Fever	...	—	—	—
Pneumonia	...	22	—	7
Other diseases generally notifiable :—				
Enceph. Lethargica	...	1	—	—
Erysipelas	...	4	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	—	—	—

### 3a. TUBERCULOSIS.

Age-Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—4 years	—	—	2	1	—	—	1	—
5—9 years	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
10—14 years	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	—
15—19 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
20—24 years	1	1	—	—	1	1	—	—
25—34 years	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—
35—44 years	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
45—54 years	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
55—64 years	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
65 years and upwards	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
All ages	3	5	5	2	4	4	2	—

One of the fatal cases unnotified.

## 5. Summary of Nursing Arrangements, Hospitals and other Institutions available for the Combined Sanitary Districts of the Guisborough Union.

**Professional Nursing in the Home.** Generally speaking, home nursing facilities are supplied by (a) District Nursing Associations in Redcar borough and the four urban districts of Guisborough, Loftus, Saltburn-by-the-Sea and Skelton and Brotton, and in Marske, and also in Danby, in the Guisborough Rural District; (b) Private Nurses working on their own account; and (c) Private Nursing Homes in Saltburn-by-the-Sea, and in Marske. None of these are connected with the District Councils in any way, but the District Nursing Associations receive subsidies from the County Council. District Nurses do not attend infectious cases.

**Midwives.** The number of practising midwives at the end of the year was one in each of the Guisborough, Loftus and Saltburn-by-the-Sea Urban Districts, two in Guisborough Rural District, five in Redcar, and five in the Skelton and Brotton Urban District.

**Clinics and Treatment Centres.** Guisborough has a Maternity and Child Welfare Centre provided by the District Council, meeting in the Chaloner Hall, where the hall is available for lectures, the weighing of babies, needlework, etc., and a connected room is used for the doctor's consultations.

In the Loftus Urban District there is one Maternity and Child Welfare Centre provided by the District Council at Loftus in the Town Hall, the other at Carlin How having been closed; in the former a large room is used for addresses to mothers etc. and a small room for the weighing of babies and for doctor's consultations.

In Redcar a Maternity and Child Welfare Centre is held in the Institute, Lord Street, conducted by a voluntary committee. A large room is used as a lecture hall, etc., and smaller rooms are used for the weighing of babies and for the doctor's consultations.

In the Skelton and Brotton Urban District, Maternity and Child Welfare Centres have been provided by the District Council at the three largest centres of population, viz: Skelton, Brotton and Lingdale. At Brotton the meetings are held in the Primitive Methodist Schoolroom, where one large room is utilized. At Skelton the Centre meets in the Institute, and has the use of a large room for addresses etc., and two smaller rooms for the weighing of babies and doctor's consultations. At Lingdale the meetings take place in the Church Room, where beside the one large room, there is a small room utilized for the doctor's consultations.

One School Clinic is carried on in the area by the County Council, in the St. John's Ambulance Room at Carlin How.

The County Council has provided for some time a Tuberculosis Dispensary and there is also a Venereal Disease Clinic: the former at 33, Nelson Street, South Bank, on Thursdays from 10-12, pensioners by appointment, other patients 12-1 and 2-4 p.m., and the latter at Grange Road West, Middlesbrough (entrance, Brentnall Street), for men on Mondays and Fridays, 8-30 a.m. and 5-30 p.m., and for women and children on Wednesdays, 5-30 p.m. The value of these facilities, as far as the Guisborough, Loftus, and Skelton and Brotton Urban Districts is concerned, is seriously lessened by the expensive, lengthy, and highly inconvenient railway journey entailed.

### Hospitals provided or subsidised by Local Authority or by the County Council:

The North Riding County Council retains beds in three Sanatoria for cases of Tuberculosis, at Aysgarth Sanatorium for the adult medical cases, at the Rutson Hospital, Northallerton, for adult surgical cases, and at Stannington Sanatorium, Northumberland, for children with surgical tuberculosis. In addition, the Morris Grange Sanatorium, near Catterick, is run by the County Council for children with tuberculosis.

Hospital accommodation for one variety of Infectious Disease (usually Scarlet Fever) is provided by each of the Councils except the Guisborough Rural District. Guisborough Urban District has eight beds in a cottage with wood and iron annexe, one and a half miles south of the town. Loftus has ten beds in a similar building between Loftus and Skinningrove. Redcar possesses eight beds in two converted cottages near Warrenby, and is erecting more suitable accommodation. Saltburn-by-the-Sea has twelve beds in a wood and asbestos-cement building, on the Marske Road, half a mile outside the district. Skelton and Brotton have twelve beds in a converted cottage at Lingdale. The Guisborough Rural District has no hospital accommodation for fever cases, but is taking steps, along with the Guisborough Urban District, to obtain a joint hospital.

There is a Joint Board Smallpox Hospital for all the districts of the Union except Loftus Urban District, situated near New Marske, with six beds in two wards and a Reception House. Loftus Urban District Council proposes to set apart one of the blocks at its isolation hospital for the reception of any smallpox cases that may arise.

Ambulance Facilities. With the exception of Saltburn-by-the-Sea the Urban Districts and Redcar have adapted conveyances or horse ambulances which are used for transporting fever cases to hospital. At Saltburn a carriage is hired for the purpose and disinfected after use.

For non-infectious and accident cases, up-to-date Motor Ambulances have been provided by the St. John's Ambulance and Red Cross Organisations, one being stationed at Guisborough and another at Carlin How.

# 6. LABORATORY WORK, ETC.

## Loftus Urban

	Borough of Redcar	Guiseborough Rural District	Guiseborough Urban District	Loftus Urban District	Salisbury by-the-Sea Urban District	Skelton and Urban District
Sputa examined for Tubercle bacilli	...	8	12	11	3	9
Sputa found positive	...	2	2	4	0	0
Swabs from Diphtheria suspects examined	...	8	9	9	1	8
Swabs from Diphtheria suspects found positive	...	3	0	1	0	5
Swabs from Diphtheria convalescents examined	...	2 (7 positive) (2 positive)	0	1	0	4 (1 positive)
Swabs from Diphtheria contacts	...	1	—	—	—	3
Blood examined for Enteric Fever (Widal Test)	...	—	1 (Positive B. Typh.)	—	1	4 (1 positive B. Typh.)
Cerebro-spinal fluid examined	...	—	2	—	—	—
Blood-films, leucocyte count	...	—	1	—	1	5
Other examinations	...	—	—	—	1	2
Diphtheria Antitoxin issued by Local Authority	...	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

# 6a. ADOPTIVE ACTS, BYELAWS AND REGULATIONS in force in the Districts.

## Loftus Urban

	Borough of Redear.	Guisborough Rural District.	Guisborough Urban District.	Loftus Urban District.	Saltburn by-the-Sea Urban District.	Skelton and Brotton Urban District.
<b>A. ADOPTIVE ACTS.</b>						
Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890	Adopted 1921	—	—	Adopted 1891	Adopted 1891	—
Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1890, Part III	... Adopted 1891	Adopted 1896	Adopted 1893	Adopted 1891	Adopted 1891	Adopted 1896
Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1907, Chief Sanitary Sections	... Adopted 1908	Adopted 1908	Adopted 1908	Adopted 1908	Adopted 1908	Adopted 1908
<b>B. BYELAWS.</b>						
New Streets and Buildings	1921	1901	1893	1879	1923	1878
Cleansing of Footways, Removal of House Refuse, Cleansing of Privies, etc.	1893	1901	1893	1879		1879
Nuisances	1893	—	1893	1879	1882	1879
Common Lodging Houses	1893	1878	1893	1879	1882	1879
Slaughter-houses	1893	1901	1893	1879	1882	1879
Tents, Vans and Sheds	1912	1914	1917		1911	
Offensive Trades	1922	—	—	—	—	—
<b>C. REGULATIONS.</b>						
Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk Shops	1895	1900	1900	1900	1900	1906
Removal to Hospital of Persons brought within the District by any ship or boat	—	—	—	1909		

# 7. ABSTRACT OF THE WORK OF THE SANITARY DEPARTMENT.

	Number dealt with.	Informal Notices.	Statutory Notices.	Result.	Remarks.
Nuisances	75	75	9	Compliance except for 1 informal notice outstanding.	Renewal of 66 pans.
Slaughter-houses	6	6	0	Compliance	415 Inspections; 1,217 Carcases, 1 Carcase (800 lbs.) was surrendered as tuberculous and destroyed.
Dairies and Cowsheds	21	0	0	—	—
Bakehouses	7	1	0	Compliance	—
Factories and Workshops	67	0	0	—	—
Common Lodging House	1	2	0	Compliance	40 Inspections made.
Offensive Trades	8	0	0	—	—
Music Halls, Cinemas, etc.	3	4	0	Work in hand	—
Premises Disinfected	34	0	0	—	—

Sanitary Conveniences: 1 pail-closet was converted to water closet. At the 31st December, 1924, there were remaining 370 privies, 1,114 pail-closets and 383 water-closets.

## 8. PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

### Loftus Urban

	Loftus Urban				
	Borough of Redcar.	Guisborough Rural District.	Guisborough Urban District.	Loftus Urban District.	Saltburn by the Sea Urban District.
A. WHOLE-TIME OFFICERS.					
Medical Officer of Health	...			Dr. C. R. Gibson.	
Sanitary Inspectors	Mr. W. Tutin	Mr. G. W. Shipley	Mr. R. H. Kilburn	Mr. P. H. Audsley	Mr. A. R. Crammer
B. PART-TIME OFFICERS.					
Medical Officers to Maternity and Child Welfare Centres	—	—	Dr. Bland Dr. Stainthorpe	Dr. Stephen	Dr. Botham Dr. Caldwell Dr. Howe

\* Also Surveyor for the district concerned.

## 9. HOUSING.

## Loftus Urban

	Borough of Redcar.	Guisborough Rural District.	Guisborough Urban District.	Loftus Urban District.	Saltburn Urban District.	Skelton & Bretton Urban District.
New Houses erected in 1924 :						
Total ...	226	13	2	3	39	2
With Subsidy ...	123	10	2	0	5	0
Without Subsidy ...	36	3	0	0	34	0
Under District Council Scheme ...	67	0	0	0	0	0
Houses inspected under Public Health or Housing Acts ...	66	0	12	30	25	89
Houses inspected under Housing Regu- lations, 1910 ...	10	0	12	30	9	89
Houses found unfit for habitation ...	22	0	0	0	0	0
Houses found requiring repair ...	44	0	12	9	7	89
Houses repaired in consequence of informal notices ...	22	0	0	6	7	73
Proceedings under Sec. 28 of the 1919 Housing Act :						
(1) Houses respecting which formal notices were served ...	0	0	12	3	2	7
(2) Houses rendered fit by Owners ...	0	0	9	3	2	7
(3) Houses rendered fit by L. A. ..	0	0	0	0	0	0
(4) Houses voluntarily closed by Owners	0	0	0	0	0	0
Proceedings under Public Health Acts :						
(1) Houses respecting which formal notices were served ...	0	0	0	0	0	0
(2) Houses repaired by Owners ...	0	0	0	0	0	0
(3) Houses repaired by L. A. ...	0	0	0	0	0	0
Proceedings under Secs. 17, 18 of the 1909 Housing Act :						
Closing Order made ...	22	0	0	0	0	0
Other action	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 10. COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS.

## Loftus Urban

	Skelton & Brotton Urban District.	Loftus Urban District.	Guisborough Urban District.	Guisborough Rural District.	Borough of Redcar.	Saltburn-by-the-Sea Urban District.	England and Wales.
Percentage of houses in 1921 with fewer than six rooms	87	86	84	75	69	35	(70)
Birth-rate { 1924 ... { 1923 ...	20.6 22.2	19.9 18.4	20.9 19.5	20.0 22.4	19.1 18.8	11.7 11.3	18.8 19.7
Death-rate { 1924 ... { 1923 ...	11.9 11.4	9.2 8.1	14.6 11.1	13.9 8.8	12.0 10.8	11.7 12.1	12.2 11.6
Infant Mortality Rate { 1924 ... { 1923 ...	77 65½	43 47	68 57½	132½ 60	75 79	66½ 70	75 69

Comparisons between localities are open to many fallacies: differences in social composition (such as are indicated in the first row of the table) must be taken into consideration; further, before comparing birth-rates a knowledge of the relative proportion of young married women in the districts is necessary, or before comparing death-rates, information as to the relative numbers of people at ages when death is less avoidable.





